

FILED IN THE
U.S. DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

Jul 25, 2025

SEAN F. McAVOY, CLERK

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON

SERAFIN RANGEL-SAMBRANO,

Plaintiff,

v.

ADAMS COUNTY SHERIFF'S
OFFICE, ADAMS COUNTY, EVAN
ARMSTRONG, Corporal, Adams
County Sheriff's Office, in his
individual capacity; DALE
WAGNER, Sheriff, Adams County
Sheriff's Office, in his individual and
official capacity,

Defendants.

No: 4:25-CV-00003-RLP

ORDER DENYING MOTION FOR
STIPULATED PROTECTIVE ORDER

Before the Court is the parties' Joint Motion for Entry of Revised Stipulated Protective Order, ECF No. 11. The parties seek a protective order to protect confidential material including: (1) "Medical, psychological, financial, family, personnel, and arrest related records of plaintiff, officers, and/or other non-parties;"

ORDER GRANTING IN PART JOINT MOTION FOR REVISED STIPULATED PROTECTIVE ORDER ~ 1

1 and (2) “Records that implicate privacy rights of the defendants, plaintiff, or third
2 parties, including but not limited to personal identifying information (“PII”) such
3 as date of birth, social security number, personal home address, phone number,
4 email address, driver’s license or state identification number, personal financial
5 information, passport information, immigration status, criminal history and/or
6 criminal record numbers, any information protected from release by applicable
7 statute, and other unspecified PII.” *Id.*

8 There is a strong presumption in favor of access to court records. *In re*
9 *Midland Nat. Life Ins. Co. Annuity Sales Pracs. Litig.*, 686 F.3d 1115, 1119 (9th
10 Cir. 2012). Even when parties agree to protective measures for discovery materials,
11 courts generally favor allowing access to such materials by individuals involved in
12 related litigation, as this promotes the judicial economy.¹ *Cordero v. Stemilt AG*
13 *Servs., LLC*, 2025 WL 1902292 at *4-5 (9th Cir. July 10, 2025) (citing *Foltz v.*
14 *State Farm Mut. Auto. Ins. Co.*, 331 F.3d 1122, 1131 (9th Cir. 2003)).

15 However, “[t]he court may, for good cause, issue an order to protect a party
16 or person from annoyance, embarrassment, oppression, or undue burden or

17
18 ¹ Here, there is an ongoing and related case where discovery materials may
19 overlap, further supporting the need for coordinated access to discovery materials.
20 *See State of Washington v. Adams County Sheriff's Office et al*, No. 25-2-01212-32
(Sup. Ct. Spokane Cnty 2025).

1 expense.” FRCP 26(c). The party seeking a protective order has the burden of
2 establishing good cause and must show prejudice “for each particular document it
3 seeks to protect.” *Foltz v. State Farm Mut. Auto. Ins. Co.*, 331 F.3d 1122, 1130
4 (9th Cir. 2003). “Broad allegations of harm, unsubstantiated by specific examples
5 or articulated reasoning, do not satisfy the Rule 26(c) test.” *Beckman Indus., Inc. v.*
6 *Int’l Ins. Co.*, 966 F.2d 470, 476 (9th Cir. 1992). The requirement to demonstrate
7 good cause cannot be waived, and remains even where the parties stipulate to the
8 order. *San Jose Mercury News, Inc. v. U.S. Dist. Ct.--N. Dist. (San Jose)*, 187 F.3d
9 1096, 1103 (9th Cir. 1999).

10 It is this Court’s preference to not enter general Protective Orders that
11 simply set forth the parties’ agreement for handling “confidential” materials. Here,
12 the Parties have not set forth any allegations of potential harm should these
13 categories of information be released. While some categories, such as social
14 security numbers and home addresses, are specific and likely to meet this
15 threshold, other categories contain publicly available records that may not rise to
16 the same level of sensitivity or harm if disclosed. This is especially so with regards
17 to criminal history, much of which is a matter of public record.

18 The Court finds the categories of “confidential material” as defined by the
19 parties to be vague and overbroad. “Records that implicate privacy rights the
20 defendants, plaintiff, or third Parties” is a vague and broad description with an

1 undefined reach. As for the parties' definition of "PII," they fail to describe
2 specific harm resulting from the disclosure of such records. For these reasons, the
3 Court declines to issue a protective order proposed by the parties.

4 The parties are free to contract between themselves regarding disclosure of
5 information produced in discovery and pursue appropriate remedies in the event of
6 breach; however, the Court will not be party to such an agreement. If the parties
7 wish to file specific items of discovery in the court record and protect such items
8 from public access, the Court will entertain a motion to seal or an application for a
9 narrowly tailored protective order.

10 Accordingly, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** that the parties' Joint Motion for
11 Entry of Revised Stipulated Protective Order, **ECF No. 11**, is **DENIED**. The
12 District Court Executive shall enter this order and provide copies to counsel.

13 **DATED** July 25, 2025.



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15 REBECCA L. PENNELL
United States District Judge